



The French Market for Toys and Games

Toy Market Overview

The French market for toys and games is a large and dynamic market made up of many diverse segments. In 2016, the market generated a turnover of 3.4 billion Euros (3.67 billion USD). The market experienced a growth of 1% in 2016, which is less than the 3.4% growth seen in 2015. In 2015, the average expenditure on toys reached 321 Euros (345 USD) per child. Expenditure per child in France is 60% higher than the European average.

As is the case in many toy markets, the third trimester of the year is the most important for toy sales in France. Sales during December 2016 alone accounted for 33% of sales made during the entire year. Unlike the toy market in the United States, France does not typically see a large jump in sales on Black Friday.

The most popular sectors of toys are stuffed animals, crafts, board games, and puzzles. Licensed toys and games related to entertainment, like the Star Wars movies or the Euro 2016 soccer matches, represent a large sector of the market and their popularity has led to continued growth throughout the past several years.

Toy Market Segments

There was a net growth in the toy and game market in 2016, yet some segments fared better than others. Most notably, the plush toys and stuffed animals segments of the market grew by 11% while the sector for preschool toys declined by 1%.

Plush Toys

As mentioned above, plush toys and stuffed animals saw a growth of 11% in 2016. Much of this growth can be attributed to the popularity of licensed characters from movies and TV shows. Innovative plush toys with electronic elements, like the ability to walk, talk, etc., were also very popular.

Artistic Activities

The market for artistic activities grew by 8% in 2016, boosted by products like play-dough, modeling sand, and do-it-yourself activity kits.

Games and Puzzles

Board games and puzzles saw a market growth of 5% in 2016. The wide range of audiences that these activities can appeal to has helped them keep their popularity in an era of increasingly electronic toys and games. Some popular segments in this market include family games, strategic card games, trading card games, and games for young children.

Construction Games and Toys

After two years of rapid growth, the market for construction games and toys seems to be stabilizing. The market saw a modest growth of 2%, compared to the 16.6% and 18% growth seen in 2015 and 2014, respectively. Construction related activities are widely regarded by parents as important in the development and learning processes of their children.

Licensed Products

Throughout the whole market for toys and games, licensed products made up 24% percent of all toy sales. The sweeping success of movies like Star Wars and Frozen has had a positive impact on the toy and game industry and has made the production and sale of licensed products extremely profitable. Licensed products related to the Euro 2016 soccer tournaments and Pokémon Go, an online game, also fared very well in the toy market in 2016.

Preschool Toys

The market for preschool toys experienced a decline of 1% in 2016. This can most likely be attributed to the shrinking birth rate in France, which declined by 4% in 2016. As a result, the demand for toys for young children has also been shrinking.

Market Opportunities and Best Prospects

The classic sectors in the toy and games market, like puzzles and plush toys, are expected to remain in good standing throughout 2017. Those that are able to continually adapt and remain innovative will gain additional attention from buyers. Products that can be used by multiple generations, like family board games are also expected to increase in popularity.

“Smart toys” that can interact with users are expected to heavily influence the 2017 toy sales market. As toy producers try to keep older children in the toy market for longer periods of time, they will continue to look for engaging products for pre-teens and teenagers.

Demand for toys and activities related to the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) field has been steadily increasing. Activities geared towards children that teach computer programming are becoming increasingly popular.

Potential Market Obstacles

Toys and games sold in France must comply with the European directive 2009/48/CE

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/european-standards/harmonised-standards/toys/index_en.htm

Sources

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